



Keep Ohio Beautiful

Your Anti-Litter Organization

www.keepohiobeautiful.org

Ohio Litter Violations and Penalties

Ohio Litter Laws

Under Ohio law, litter is any trash thrown, discarded or dropped by a person onto public property, private property not owned by the individual, or into Ohio's waterways. The Ohio Revised Code prohibits littering, regardless of whether or not it was intentional. Numerous laws prohibit littering and illegal dumping.

Littering is a serious offense, **punishable by fines of up to \$500 and 60 days in jail**. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is committed to keeping Ohio clean and beautiful.

There are many kinds of littering offenses; the following is a brief overview of Ohio's major litter laws.

Littering and Illegal Dumping - ORC 3767.32

Dumping waste, such as discarded trash, oil, appliances, scrap tires, furniture and other items, on private or public land and waterways is strictly prohibited by Ohio law. In addition to being unsightly, illegal dumps can pose health and safety hazards to people and wildlife. Ohioans must use licensed disposal facilities and insist that contracted waste haulers dispose of trash safely and legally.

ORC 3767.32 also prohibits unauthorized persons from knowingly placing litter and household wastes in a private litter/trash receptacle, unless he or she has authorization to use the litter/trash receptacle or the waste materials were generated on the public property where the receptacle is located. This protects property owners from having to pay for wastes illegally dumped into their litter/trash receptacles.

Littering from a Motor Vehicle - ORC 4511.82

Littering from a motor vehicle **can result in fines of up to \$100**, depending upon the seriousness of the offense. For casual littering from motor vehicles, law enforcement officers can issue tickets, just as they do for other traffic violations. The driver of a motor vehicle can also be held responsible for litter discarded onto the roadway by passengers.

Littering from a Watercraft Vessel - ORC 1547.49

This law is similar to littering from a motor vehicle law. No operator or occupant of a vessel, regardless of intent, may discard or deposit litter in any Ohio waters. The operator of a watercraft vessel can also be held responsible for allowing litter to be dropped out of the vessel.

(A) As used in this section, "litter" means garbage, trash, waste, rubbish, ashes, cans, bottles, wire, paper, cartons, vessel parts, vehicle parts, furniture, glass, or anything else of an unsightly or unsanitary nature.

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(B) No operator or occupant of a vessel shall, regardless of intent, throw, drop, discard, or deposit litter from any vessel in operation or control upon or in any waters in this state, except into a litter receptacle in a manner that prevents its being carried away or deposited by the elements.

(C) No operator of a vessel in operation upon any waters in this state shall allow litter to be thrown, dropped, discarded, or deposited from the vessel, except into a litter receptacle in a manner that prevents its being carried away or deposited by the elements.

Unsecured Load - ORC 4513.31

This law requires vehicles transporting materials that could escape, leak or drop be designed to remain inside the vehicle at all times. In addition, vehicles loaded with garbage, solid waste or other unsanitary materials that are susceptible to blowing or bouncing out, cannot be driven unless their contents are sufficiently covered. Law enforcement officers do not have to witness the material falling from a vehicle in order to make an arrest. Exceptions to this law include farm vehicles transporting agricultural products and trash vehicles in the process of acquiring their loads.

Prohibiting Polluting State Land or Water - ORC 1531-29

No person shall place or dispose of in any manner, any garbage, waste, peelings of vegetables or fruits, rubbish, ashes, cans, bottles, wire, paper, cartons, boxes, parts of automobiles, wagons, furniture, glass, oil, or anything else of an unsightly or unsanitary nature on any state owned, controlled, or administered land, or in any ditch, stream, river, lake, pond, or other watercourse, except those waters which do not combine or effect a junction with natural surface or underground waters, or upon the bank thereof where the same is liable to be washed into the water either by ordinary flow or floods. This section does not apply to any substance placed under authority of a permit issued under section 6111.04 of the Revised Code or exempted by such section from its terms.

Open Burning or Open Dumping - ORC 3734.03

No person shall dispose of solid wastes by open burning or open dumping, except as authorized by the director of environmental protection in rules adopted in accordance with division (V) of section 3734.01, section 3734.02, or sections 3734.70 to 3734.73 of the Revised Code and except for burying or burning the body of a dead animal as authorized by section 941.14 of the Revised Code. No person shall dispose of treated or untreated infectious wastes by open burning or open dumping. Section 3734.03 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) calls the act open dumping. It is considered an unclassified felony, which is **punishable by a fine of \$10,000 to \$25,000 and a jail sentence of two to four years.**

